

American botanists, and that its intent, as understood by many members of the Botanical Club of the American Association and by some at least of the nomenclature committee, was not to establish the Rochester and Madison rules but to show their outcome and give a better basis for their discussion, I must express considerable surprise at the following sentence of Mr. Coville's criticism of my review: "Now that they [the principles] have been adopted by overwhelming majorities in democratic botanical assemblages, we may ask whether Dr. Robinson's protest is not out of place." Certainly to object to the discussion of this subject and to rule out the expression of any opinion at variance with the new rules is as unscientific as it is undemocratic.—B. L. ROBINSON.

Recommendations regarding the nomenclature of systematic botany.

[A circular with the above title has recently been issued by Dr. B. L. Robinson, curator of the Gray herbarium. We republish the recommendations, omitting the prefatory remarks and arguments. The paper is signed by seventy-four botanists "of various degrees of repute"—to use Mr. Rand's expression regarding the supporters of the Rochester agreement.—EDS.]

1. Ordinal names, having been established by long usage, should not be subjected to revision upon theoretical grounds.

2. Long-established and generally known generic names . . . should be retained. The scope of this rule is left to the discretion of writers. . . .

3. In specific nomenclature the first correct combination is to be preferred. . . . For these reasons it seems best to adopt the principle of priority under the genus. It is to be emphasized, however, that this ruling does not lessen the obligation of botanists of the present and future in making a transfer of a species from one genus to another to preserve scrupulously the specific name without alteration, except in the case of an existing homonym.

4. The varietal name is to be regarded as inferior in rank to the specific. . . . No specific name should be altered, because of preexisting varietal names for the same plant. Nevertheless, it is recommended as a working rule that whenever a variety is raised to specific or a species depressed to varietal rank the name should be preserved whenever possible.

5. The principle of "once a synonym always a synonym," while recommended as an excellent working rule for present and future, may not justly be made retroactive.